In the claims:

Following is a complete set of claims as amended with this Response.

1. -24. (Canceled)

25.   (New) A method comprising:

receiving information from at least two different remote servers representing

different providers regarding available resource items from the respective providers;

receiving a user request for a tentative hold on an available item;

sending a tentative hold request for an available resource item to the

corresponding remote server in response to the user request;

receiving confirmation of the tentative hold from the corresponding remote

server, the tentative hold, the tentative hold reserving the resource item without excluding

other tentative holds for the resource item;

sending a reservation request for the resource item to the corresponding remote

server in response to a user confirmation for the resource item, the reservation excluding

other reservations for the resource item.

26.   (New) The method of Claim 25, wherein receiving information comprises

receiving the information at a transaction coordinator of a client system operated by the

user and wherein sending a tentative hold request and sending a reservation request

comprise sending by the transaction coordinator.

27.   (New) The method of Claim 26, wherein sending from the transaction

coordinator comprises sending to a remote transaction manager, the transaction manager

being connected to the remote servers and causing a tentative hold record to be created and associated with the resource item.

28.   (New) The method of Claim 27, wherein sending a reservation request comprises the transaction coordinator directing the commitment of a transaction corresponding to the tentative hold after successfully gaining the tentative hold on the resource items and receiving confirmation from the transaction manager regarding the tentative hold.

29.   (New) The method of Claim 28, wherein the directing the commitment of the transaction comprises initiating conventional Two-Phase Commit (2PC) prepare and commit processing for the transaction.

30.   (New) The method of Claim 25, wherein sending a tentative hold request comprises sending call back information.

31.   (New) The method of Claim 30, further comprising receiving a notification form the corresponding remote server using the call back information, the notification indicating that the resource item is no longer available and notifying the user accordingly.

32.   (New) The method of Claim 25, wherein the tentative hold records are stored at an intermediate server that is not within the providers offering the resource items.

33.   (New) The method of Claim 25, wherein sending a reservation request comprises requesting an exclusive lock on the resource item.

34.   (New) The method of Claim 25, wherein the tentative hold has a timeout.

35. (New) The method of Claim 25, further comprising receiving a user request for a resource item, and querying the different providers for corresponding available resource items in response to the user request, before receiving information.

36. (New) The method of Claim 25, further comprising sending a tentative hold request for a plurality of additional items, receiving confirmations of the tentative holds for additional items, and reporting the confirmed tentative holds to the user.

37. (New) The method of Claim 36, further comprising sending reservation requests for a portion of the additional items in response to a user confirmation for the additional items.

38. (New) A method comprising:

receiving information from at least two different providers regarding at least two available transactions, the two or more transactions involving two or more resource items; and

receiving a tentative hold request for an available resource item;

requesting that a resource manager place a tentative hold on the resource item involved in the transaction, the tentative hold allowing other tentative holds to be simultaneously maintained on the resource item;

associating the tentative hold with the resource item and storing call back information identifying a return communication path to the requestor;

receiving a transaction request for the resource item; and

granting an exclusive lock on the resource item.

39.   (New) The method of claim 38, wherein the requestor is an originating application, the method further comprising responsive to the transaction request, notifying, via corresponding call back information, other applications having tentative holds on the same resource items that their respective tentative holds have been suspended.

40.   (New) The method of Claim 39, further comprising:

receiving a second request associated with a second transaction, the second request soliciting a tentative hold on the resource item;

creating a second tentative hold record and associating it with the resource item;

maintaining a second tentative hold on the resource item until an exclusive lock is obtained on the resource item or for a predetermined amount of time, whichever occurs first;

upon receiving the transaction request, suspending the second non-mutually exclusive hold and granting an exclusive lock on the resource item.

41.   (New) A machine-readable medium having stored thereon data representing sequences of instructions, the sequences of instructions which, when executed by a machine, causes the machine to perform operations comprising:

receiving information from at least two different remote servers representing different providers regarding available resource items from the respective providers;

receiving a user request for a tentative hold on an available item;

sending a tentative hold request for an available resource item to the corresponding remote server in response to the user request;

receiving confirmation of the tentative hold from the corresponding remote

server, the tentative hold, the tentative hold reserving the resource item without excluding

other tentative holds for the resource item;

sending a reservation request for the resource item to the corresponding remote

server in response to a user confirmation for the resource item, the reservation excluding

other reservations for the resource item.

42.   (New) The medium of Claim 41, wherein the instruction are further to

receive a user request for a resource item, and query the different providers for

corresponding available resource items in response to the user request, before receiving

information.

43.   (New) The medium of Claim 41, further comprising instructions causing

the machine to perform operations comprising:

sending a tentative hold request for a plurality of additional items;

receiving confirmations of the tentative holds for additional items;

reporting the confirmed tentative holds to the user; and

sending reservation requests for a portion of the additional items in response to a

user confirmation for the additional items.

44.   (New) A distributed transaction processing system comprising:

a distributed transaction coordinator executing on a first client system, the

distributed transaction coordinator to place tentative holds on each of a plurality of

resource items associated with a transaction that spans a plurality of network resources,

the tentative holds reserving the respective resource item without excluding other

tentative holds for the resource items, and to commence completion of transaction by obtaining exclusive locks on each of the plurality of resource items after the tentative holds have been successfully granted on each of the plurality of resource items, wherein the plurality of resource items are from different service providers; and

a distributed transaction manager executing on a server system communicatively coupled with a plurality of client systems including the first client system, the distributed transaction manager to maintain a plurality of tentative holds for each of a plurality of resource items associated with the server system and to grant only one exclusive lock per single resource item of the plurality of resource items at a given time in response to requests from distributed transaction coordinators.

45.   (New) The distributed transaction processing system of Claim 44, wherein the distributed transaction coordinator includes a Two-Phase Commit transaction coordinator.

46.   (New) The distributed transaction processing system of Claim 44, wherein the distributed transaction manager is further to notify other distributed transaction coordinators that a tentative hold for a resource item has been suspended upon granting the exclusive lock for the resource item.